United Nations A/61/779

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 March 2007

Original: English

Sixty first session
Agenda item 27
Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Letter dated 2 March 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the statement of the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Conflict Resolution dated 2 March 2007, regarding the fact that so-called Abkhaz law enforcement units opened fire at a peaceful public demonstration in the conflict zone of Abkhazia, Georgia, on 1 March 2007 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 27.

(*Signed*) Irakli **Alasania**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

07-26044 (E) 080307

Annex to the letter dated 2 March 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Conflict Resolution

On 1 March 2007, so-called Abkhazian law enforcement units, while situated in the zone controlled by the Commonwealth of Independent States peacekeeping force between checkpoints N 202 and 306, opened fire at a peaceful public demonstration of both Georgian and Abkhaz groups of local students, who were expressing their opinion with regard to the illegitimate elections of 4 March to the de facto Parliament and violent aggressive policy of the separatist regime. As a result, three peaceful protesters were kidnapped: Ghachava, Rogava and Karshia. These persons are still illegally detained and, according to the Abkhaz side, will not be released any time soon.

The above-mentioned actions were aimed against any form of free expression of opinion; they also serve as a tool to deter rapprochement between the Abkhaz and Georgian societies, and hinder the confidence-building process. All of the above directly oppose peaceful initiatives proposed by the Government of Georgia and once again clearly demonstrate the separatist regime's destructive approach towards the peace process.

The Office of the State Minister expresses its strongest protest with respect to such provocation. This incident, in the lower zone of Gali district, once more underlines the intimidating policy towards the local population, which is based on the practice of reiterating gross violations of human rights and often is freely conducted because of the ineffectiveness of CIS peacekeepers.

Such developments once again underline the necessity to activate the United Nations civilian police component and introduce the branches of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) based in Sukhumi and United Nations human rights protection offices in Gali region.

The Abkhaz side should be aware that such actions seriously damage preliminary agreement on continuation of dialogue, which is a cornerstone of confidence-building and peaceful settlement of the conflict.

The Office of the State Minister for Conflict Resolution has forwarded a relevant letter to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Georgia, Jean Arnault. We also address OSCE, the Council of Europe and the Group of Friends involved in the settlement of the conflict, as well as international organizations operating in Georgia, to use any means available for the immediate and unconditional liberation of imprisoned persons.